

presidency for decades to come. But even now, it is clear that President Reagan presided over, and helped bring about, enormous changes in America, and in the world.

His unflinching opposition to communism helped bring down the wall and bring about the end of the Soviet Union. For that, the world owes Ronald Reagan a great debt of gratitude.

Americans, and friends of America throughout the world, are saddened by President Reagan's death.

Our hearts go out to the Reagan family, especially Mrs. Reagan and the Reagan children and grandchildren, as well as to President and Mrs. Reagan's friends. Even when someone has been slipping away for a long time, as President Reagan did, the final goodbye is still heartbreaking. We wish them comfort in this time of great sorrow.

In his 1987 autobiography, "Man of the House," Tip O'Neill recalled the time President-elect Reagan visited him in his office in early 1981. The Speaker told the man who was soon to be President that in the House, Democrats and Republicans "are always friends after 6 o'clock and on weekends."

For the next 6 years, until he retired, Tip O'Neill recalled, President Reagan always began their phone conversations by asking, "Tip, is it after 6 o'clock?"

It has been nearly 10 years since President Reagan wrote his courageous letter to America telling us that he had Alzheimer's disease.

In the decade since President Reagan began his quiet withdrawal from public life, the civility and personal decency that we associate with him seems, at times, to have all but disappeared from much of our public discourse. The elbows in politics have become sharper, the words have become meaner—and the accomplishments have become scarcer.

Sadly, there is a tendency today to assume ill will and bad motives of those who belong to the other party—or even another wing of one's own party.

This decline of civility in politics and public discourse is not good for America. It does not make us safer, or stronger.

President Reagan spoke to all that was good and decent in America. We would honor him by restoring decency to our politics.

Ronald Reagan was a man who believed deeply in his core principles. He would not want any of us to compromise our own core principles in his memory. But there is such a thing as principled compromise. President Reagan understood that. He knew that accommodation was needed to make the system work.

Like many conservatives, President Reagan had some basic philosophical qualms about Social Security. But he appointed a bipartisan commission to find ways to save Social Security from imminent insolvency—and he backed

the commission's plan. That was principled compromise at work.

Twenty-four years ago this week, Ronald Reagan had just clinched the delegates needed to win his party's 1980 Presidential nomination. It was a nomination he had worked for for 12 years.

A newspaper reporter asked him what he thought he needed to do next.

He replied that he wanted to dispel the notion that he was a hard-nosed radical who would oppose compromise on principle. As he put it:

You know, there are some people so imbued with their ideology that if they can't get everything they want, they'll jump off the cliff with the flag flying. As governor, I found out that if I could get half a loaf, instead of stalking off angrily, I'd take it.

Perhaps because he himself was a Democrat early in his life, President Reagan never demonized his political opponents—even when he disagreed profoundly with them.

When Tip O'Neill turned 70, President Reagan hosted a reception for him at the White House. There they were: the opposing champions of laissez-faire economics and New Deal liberalism. President Reagan toasted Tip O'Neill by saying:

Tip, if I had a ticket to heaven and you didn't have one too, I would give mine away and go to hell with you.

President Reagan and Tip O'Neill, I am convinced, are reunited in heaven now.

As we prepare here in the Capitol to say our final goodbye to President Reagan, let us remember his capacity to see the best in everyone, including those whose political views differed starkly from his own. Let us remember that there is no dishonor in accepting a half a loaf.

In the months ahead and for as long as we are given the honor of serving in Congress, let us search and work for principled compromises that serve the interests of the vast majority of Americans. In that way, we can help to preserve President Reagan's great belief and hope that America's best days are, indeed, just ahead.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Idaho, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:16 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. INHOFE).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from the State of Oklahoma, suggests the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FITZGERALD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and the legacy of former President Ronald Reagan. President Reagan served our country with honor and distinction, and I feel privileged to have the opportunity to reflect on the contributions he made to our country and to the world.

Upon hearing the news of his death, I thought back to the footprints he left on my memory. He was, indeed, one of the greatest leaders, I believe, of our time, and I was honored to know him.

President Reagan provided our country with an enormous amount of hope following a period of national remorse and confusion about the direction of our country and about its place in the world. Let us not forget the context into which he emerged to seize his place in history and to move the United States forward with a determination and an optimism about the future that was so recently lacking.

The ghost of Vietnam haunted our foreign policy and the specter of Watergate informed our politics.

The election of Ronald Reagan, however, truly changed America. He instilled hope that every American could be optimistic about his or her future; hope that communism would not endure and that freedom and democracy could ultimately vanquish the forces that sought to pull our country, and many others, into the abyss of despair and hostility that permeated much of the world; hope that personal freedom without the encumbrances of big government would revitalize the economy; hope that the rejuvenated armed forces he would lead as Commander-in-Chief could make the United States once again truly the leader of the Free World in a struggle for survival against the Soviet Union.

President Reagan's eternal optimism gave our country a renewed sense of self, a belief that the American dream was possible and that every individual had the opportunity to create his or her own success. Ronald Reagan believed that each new day was filled with high purpose and opportunity for accomplishment. He gave America back the hope we had lost for many years.

President Reagan's leadership and courage were central to ending the Cold War. He was certain that freedom and democracy could prevail in all corners of the globe if only the one country with the capacity to do so would step in and show the way.